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Food and Nutrition

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SCHOOL LUNCH FUNDING REGULATIONS LIBERALIZED

ASSISTANT SECRETARY Richard Lyng announced on October 6 a liberalization of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's regulations for the funding of the National School Lunch Program.

USDA's proposals to amend the regulations were announced in August, and comments on those proposals were invited from all interested persons. More than 300 comments were received in response to this invitation. Comments expressed in hearings by Senate committees and the debate in the Senate were also taken into consideration.

"All of these comments have been carefully considered," Mr. Lyng said, "in reaching our decision." In the final regulations that were announced, several important changes were made from the regulations originally proposed.

The following are the principal changes from the proposed regulations:

- The additional funding provided from Section 11 (special cash assistance funds) for free and reduced-price lunches has been increased to a minimum Statewide average of 40 cents a lunch. This is an increase of 10 cents over the proposed 30 cent average reimbursement.

- Reimbursement to be paid from Federal funds for free or reduced-price lunches will be limited to lunches served to children from those families whose income falls below the income-poverty guidelines set each year by the Secretary of Agriculture.

- States will be permitted to use November records--instead of January, as was originally proposed--as a basis for revising estimates of the number of lunches to be served in participating schools for the remainder of the year, so they can make the necessary adjustments in assigned rates of reimbursement.

- The criteria used to determine the need for an especially needy school to receive a more liberal reimbursement rate for special assistance were also modified.

The final regulations continue--at a minimum Statewide average of 5 cents per lunch--the rate of reimbursement that will be paid for all lunches, including lunches provided to needy and non-needy children.

"No change has been made," Mr. Lyng emphasized, "in the important principle

of 'payment for performance' that was the basis of the changes proposed. For the first time in the history of the school lunch program, a State needing to expand its program to substantially more schools and substantially more children can do so without fear that such expansion will be at the expense of an unwarranted reduction in levels of assistance to schools and children who are already participating."

Mr. Lyng emphasized that maximum rates of assistance authorized in these final regulations remain essentially unchanged from last year's rates. A State is still authorized to pay reimbursement of up to 12 cents from general assistance funds, and of up to a total maximum of 60 cents to its neediest schools for free or reduced-price lunches served to children from needy families. The total reimbursement paid will not exceed the cost of the meal.

The final regulations continue the requirement that the States hold 50 percent of their nonfood assistance money in reserve for the "no-program" schools in their area, through January of the school year. This provision has been included in order to expand the program most effectively.

Mr. Lyng estimated that this increase in reimbursement rates will add about \$135 million to the cost of the National School Lunch Program for the current fiscal year. The \$615 million already available for cash assistance will be raised to about \$750 million. This total would be about 40 percent more than the \$536 million expended last year, and nearly five times the \$160 million spent in fiscal year 1968.

Mr. Lyng also estimated that these funds will enable the National School Lunch Program to reach 8,000,000 needy children this school year with free or reduced-price school lunches. At this

time a year ago, only 4,000,000 such children were being reached, and 7,300,000 children was the peak number reached during the 1970-71 school year.

Mr. Lyng reported that, with the increase represented by today's announcement, the Federal contribution to food programs in this fiscal year will total around \$4 billion. He noted that, in the past 2-1/2 years, there has been "terrific" growth in these food programs--the National School Lunch Program and other Child Nutrition Programs, and the Food Distribution Program and the Food Stamp Program for needy families.

"The tremendous expansion in these programs," Mr. Lyng said, "is in further fulfillment of President Nixon's pledge, in his May 6, 1969 Message to the Congress, to put an end to hunger in America."

Automated System to Report on Child Nutrition Programs

FNS is working with the public schools of the District of Columbia to develop an automated reporting system that can be used as a national model for a reporting system on Child Nutrition Programs.

The automated system involves the transmission of a daily card from each school with information on how many meals were served in each category and program (e.g. regular lunches, free lunches, reduced-price lunches, half-pint milk served, free and reduced-price breakfasts) and a weekly card showing the weekly amounts of dollars collected from children and adults for meals as well as the expenses connected with preparation and serving of meals. The daily card requires no computation by the school. The monthly and semi-annual reports then will be compiled

automatically and reported in the form of computer print-outs.

Cup-Can Program Expands

THE PHILADELPHIA ARCHDIOCESAN schools will be able to further develop and expand their canned entree program as a result of a gift of \$10,000.

The money was part of \$50,000 collected last May by teenagers and college students who walked 140,000 miles to raise funds for nutritional programs around the world.

THE CUP-CAN PROGRAM began operating at the St. Joseph School, Walterboro, South Carolina, on Sept. 7. This is the first such lunch program in the southeast region. Approximately 100 pupils out of a total enrollment of 113 participated in the program on the first day.

THE SAN DIEGO MISSION school at Jemez Pueblo, New Mexico, in cooperation with Campbell Soup Company at Albuquerque, has finalized plans to begin the cup-can program.

Almost all of the 160 Indian children attending school will be eligible for free or reduced price meals. This school had no food service last fall, and, even with the offer of nonfood assistance funds, could not provide facilities for a lunch program.

posters aid food stamp outreach

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES FOR the Food Stamp Program have been yielding good results. A four-color food help poster that illustrates the four food groups was developed for display in post offices across the country. It is entitled, "If Your Family Needs Food Help..."(FNS-117).

The address of the Food and Nutrition Service appears at the bottom of the poster, as well as space for a local address and/or phone number.

Late in August 43,000 were printed and distributed. By October 4, people in all but 12 States had corresponded with FNS as a result of the poster.

"FOOD STAMPS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE" (FNS-26) describes the services of the Food Stamp Division. This new Outreach poster is printed in black ink on yellow stock that measures 6" x 14". Pictured on the poster are smiling faces of two young girls and the message, "Millions of Americans Are Eating Better Today; Food Stamps Make the Difference." This is followed by a space to insert a local phone number and/or address.

Organizations involved in food stamp outreach activities may obtain a limited supply of the posters by writing the Food Stamp Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE TO DESIGN NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

THE FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE has awarded a \$110,032 contract to the National Urban League to design a nutrition education program for preschool children in day-care centers across the country.

The program will focus on: teaching nutrition to preschoolers in day-care centers; helping the families of preschool children understand the food habits vital to their child's well-being; improving the quality of family meals prepared for preschool youngsters; and determining the need for nutrition education.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK, 1971

*ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
A PROCLAMATION

The National School Lunch Program celebrates its Silver Anniversary this year. For the past quarter century, this important program has made a magnificent contribution to both the education and the health of our Nation.

The National School Lunch Program is a product of cooperation among parents, civic groups, and all levels of government. It encourages better nutrition for the schoolchildren of America. In all the participating schools, this program provides free or reduced-price lunches to needy pupils.

The Congress, by a joint resolution of October 9, 1962, designated the week beginning on the second Sunday of October in each year as National School Lunch Week, and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation calling for the observance of that week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RICHARD NIXON, President of the United States of America, do hereby urge the people of the United States to observe the week of October 10, 1971, as National School Lunch Week with appropriate ceremonies and activities designed to promote good nutrition in our schools.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 9th day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred ninety-sixth.

RICHARD NIXON

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